

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

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EUR-25 AGR-20 EB-11 ACDA-19 DRC-01 OMB-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 NEA-10 COME-00 INT-08

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SUBJECT: HIGHLIGHTS OF PRESIDENT VELASCO'S PRESS CONFERENCE

1. SPEAKING IN PARTICULARLY INFORMAL AND RELAXED MANNER FOR TWO AND ONE HALF HOURS WITH FOREIGN AND LOCAL CORRESPONDENTS AFTER RECEIVING CREDENTIALS OF NEW CHILEAN AMBASSADOR, VELASCO DISCOURSED OVER WIDE RANGE OF TOPICS. HIGHLIGHTS (ON BASIS OF OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT);

2) FOREIGN RELATIONS: (2) USSR: RELATIONS HAVE BEEN "POSITIVE" IN ALL RESPECTS. MISSIONS HAVE COME TO STUDY VARIOUS PROJECTS OF WHICH OLMOS IRRIGATION PROJECT AMONG MOST IMPORTANT. IF IT IS IMPLEMENTED, THERE WILL BE PRODUCTION TO SATISFY LOCAL NEEDS AND CONTRIBUTE TO (FOOD) SUPPLY OF OTHER COUNTRIES. SOVIETS ARE ALSO HELPING WITH STUDIES FOR WHEAT PRODUCTION. THIS HAS RESULTED IN CORDIAL, STABLE AND TRULY FRIENDLY RELATIONS. (B) CHILE: VELASCO LAMENTED SMALL DEMONSTRATION AGAINST NEW CHILEAN AMBASSADOR

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AND STATED PERSONS FROM ABROAD SHOULD BE TREATED WITH RESPECT

WITHOUT BREAK IN TRADITIONAL PERUVIAN HOSPITALITY. WITH REGARD TO CGTP (COMMUNIST-DOMINATED LABOR CONFEDERATION) CALL FOR DENUNCIATION OF CHILEAN JUNTA, VELASCO DECLARED GOP WOULD NOT CHANGE ITS FOREIGN POLICY WHICH BASED ON PRINCIPLE OF NON-INTERVENTION IN DOMESTIC AFFAIRS OF ANOTHER COUNTRY JUST BECAUSE SOME GROUP SO DESIRES. (C) CUBA: ASKED TO COMMENT WHETHER ALLEGED CASTRO STATEMENT APPROVING GOP ACQUISITION OF SOVIET ARMS WAS INTERVENTION IN DOMESTIC AFFAIRS, VELASCO REPLIED CASTRO PROBABLY SPOKE WELL OF PERU AND ITS REVOLUTION. CUBANS FOR LONG TIME HAVE PRAISED PERUVIAN REVOLUTION AND THIS CANNOT BE CONSIDERED INTERVENTION. "I CAN ALSO PRAISE CUBAN REVOLUTION AND HAVE DONE IT MANY TIMES AND I AM NOT INTERVENING." THEY ARE TWO DIFFERENT REVOLUTIONS WITH A COMMON DOMINATOR. IN SEPARATE REPLY VELASCO STATED CUBA HAS SUCCESSFULLY RESOLVED IMPORTANT PROBLEMS SUCH AS CHILD EDUCATION AND HEALTH. THIS CANNOT BE DENIED AND DISBELIEVERS SHOULD GO TO CUBA TO VERIFY IT. (D) U.S.: NEGOTIATION WITH GREECE SUBJECT OF SEPTEL.

3. OIL CRISIS: VELASCO STATED HE HAD READ SOMETHING IN PAPERS ABOUT ALLEGED U.S. THREATS AGAINST ARAB STATES BUT EXPRESSED OPINION THESE WERE PROBABLY DISTORTIONS. UNTIL "INVASION OF SANTO DOMINGO" SUCH THREATS WERE TAKEN SERIOUSLY BUT NOT TODAY. WORLD HAS CHANGED AND LARGE STATE WOULD NOT CONFRONT SMALL STATE BUT ALL THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES STRUGGLING FOR EMANCIPATION AND DEFENSE OF THEIR NATURAL RESOURCES. COMPLEX PROBLEM OF OIL DEFICIT REQUIRES ACTION ON SEVERAL FRONTS, INCLUDING INCREASE OF CONTINENTAL SHELF PRODUCTION, BRINGING PREVIOUSLY UNECONOMIC WELLS BACK INTO PRODUCTION, BELT TIGHTENING AND PERHAPS SOME RATIONING BUT NOT TO EXTENT NOW EXISTING IN CERTAIN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. VELASCO ALSO SPOKE OF ARRANGEMENTS BEING MADE TO EXPORT 5,000 BARRELS DAILY TO BRAZIL FROM PERUVIAN JUNGLE PRODUCTION.

4. INTERNAL POLITICS: VELASCO SAID COURSE OF REVOLUTION WOULD CONTINUE AT PROPER PACE -- NEITHER ACCELERATED NOR SLOWED. EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN IT IS SOMETIMES NECESSARY TO ACT WITH PRUDENCE TO AVOID MISTAKES. IMPORTANT FACT IS THAT PERUVIAN PEOPLE HAVE FAITH AND KNOW THAT REVOLUTION WILL NOT

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BE HALTED. VELASCO DENIED THERE IS INTENTION TO CREATE POLITICAL PARTY OF REVOLUTION AND SAID PARTY SYSTEM HAS FAILED IN PAST. PARTY IMPLIES DIVISION WHEREAS REVOLUTION DOES NOT SUPPORT SINGLE GROUP. QUESTIONED ABOUT REMARKS ATTRIBUTED TO EX-PRESIDENT BELAUNDE THAT HE WOULD RETURN TO PERU ONLY AFTER CONSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM RE-ESTABLISHED, VELASCO QUIPPED IF HE IS WAITING FOR US TO GO HE WILL DIE ABROAD OF OLD AGE. HOWEVER, HE ADDED BELAUNDE IS FREE TO RETURN WHEN

HE WISHES.

5. ARMS CONTROL: IN FURTHER REMARKS ABOUT CHILEAN'S CREDENTIALS CEREMONY, VELASCO EMPHASIZE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES IN ORDER TO UNDERTAKE TASKS OF DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL JUSTICE WITHOUT WASTING MONEY ON ARMS PURCHASES. HE EXPRESSED HOPE IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO MEET WITH BORDER STATES TO ARRIVE AT AGREEMENT TO FREEZE ARMS PROCUREMENT FOR LONG PERIOD BUT VELASCO SAID HE IS NOT FORMALLY PROPOSING IT. VELASCO SAID FONMIN MIGHT TAKE STEPS TO EXPLORE IDEA. IN EARLIER QUESTION RELATED TO CUBA, VELASCO SAID HE COULD NOT AND WOULD NOT SAY WHETHER PERU WOULD ACQUIRE MORE ARMS. HE HOPED NOT AND SAID EARLIER ACQUISITIONS WERE MADE BECAUSE OTHERS STARTED IT. HE EMPHASIZED THAT PURCHASE WAS SOVEREIGN ACT, TAKING ADVANTAGE OF MOST FAVORABLE CONDITIONS FOR PERU.

6. RE FRECHETTE TELCON THIS DATE, EMBASSY HAS CHECKED AP AND UPI WIRE STORIES ON VELASCO PRESS CONFERENCE. THESE WIRE SERVICE ACCOUNTS STRESS SUBJECT OF POSSIBLE DISARMAMENT MOVES. IT MAY PROVE, HOWEVER, THAT SOME OTHER WIRE SERVICE HAS CARRIED A MORE SENSATIONALIST VERSION OF POINTS MADE IN THE PRESS CONFERENCE. EMBASSY IS REVIEWING TAPE OF PRESS CONFERENCE AND IF ANY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES ARE IDENTIFIED AS BETWEEN OFFICIAL AND ACTUAL VERSIONS A FOLLOW-UP TELEGRAM WILL BE SENT COVERING THESE POINTS.

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